

Promoting Europe, cultural exchange and mobility “Europa macht Schule – Europe meets School”

Conference outcomes / recommendations

Background to the conference

Upon invitation of the DAAD, 100 participants, composed of representatives of Erasmus+ National Agencies, students and interested organisations from 13 different European countries came together at the networking conference on 22/23 May 2017 in Brussels to discuss how to strengthen **programmes and projects that promote European values, such as intercultural understanding and exchange, diversity and civic engagement**. The programme “[Europa macht Schule](#)” (Europe meets School – EmS) was presented as a good practice example, alongside further initiatives in Europe¹. The conference was also focusing on how to bundle efforts and synergies amongst the different projects and initiatives as well as on strengthening the visibility and impact of such programmes.

Please refer to the [conference website](#) for further information and conference documentation.

Conference outcomes:

1. It is necessary to fight populism, extremism and the “fear” from abroad in Europe with the help of positive, concrete and hands-on personal experiences. The presented projects were considered very suitable examples to, thus, also promote European values. Therefore, their impact, dissemination and visibility should be strengthened.
2. The different organisations and volunteers (NAs, youth networks, active actors) will join their forces and continue to share their experiences by connecting closer and forming a network.
3. The existing initiatives are excellent examples for cross-sectoral cooperation (higher education – school – youth) and have a great potential to reach out to those who need it the most (e.g. schools/ regions with feeble or no international experience).

¹ The programme “Europa macht Schule” (Europe meets School – EmS) gives European exchange students the opportunity to present their country through a cultural project in a German school, thereby creating awareness of differences and triggering interest for Europe amongst pupils and teachers.

Recommendations for future action

1. to inspire different organisations (such as NAs, youth networks, active actors) to **multiply initiatives** that promote European values, such as intercultural understanding, exchange, diversity and civic engagement:
 - in quantity
 - in their geographical outreach (all European countries)
 - reaching out to the **wider population** (young people, parents, teachers)
 - specifically targeting citizens/regions that are less privileged (possibly having less international experience).
2. to encourage different organisations (such as NAs, youth networks, active actors) and volunteers to seek **synergies** between existing programmes, foster exchange and make them better known to increase their impact.
3. to use the **Erasmus students as ambassadors** for the European idea, keep them in the center of activities (bottom-up initiatives); support voluntarism and active citizenship of young people – while maintaining **institutional support** to guarantee **sustainability** of actions.
4. to promote the integration of such initiatives in the forthcoming **EU education programme post 2020** to sustain funding and guarantee implementation of activities Europe-wide.

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